AN ORATION

ON THE

LIFE, CHARACTER AND SERVICES

OF

JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN:

DELIVERED

ON THE 21ST NOV., 1850, IN CHARLESTON, S. C.,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

BY

J. H. HAMMOND.

CHARLESTON, S. C.:
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CORRESPONDENCE.

CHARLESTON, Nov. 23d, 1850.

HON. JAMES H. HAMMOND.

Dear Sir:—As a special committee in behalf of the City Council of Charleston, we have the honor to enclose you a copy of the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted at a meeting of the City Council, held on the 23d inst., to wit:

"*Resolved*, That the City Council of Charleston having been highly gratified at the very able eulogium, delivered on the 21st inst., by the Hon. James H. Hammond, upon the life, character, and services, of the late Hon. JOHN C. CALHOUN, hereby tender this expression of their thanks for the same, and respectfully request a copy thereof, for publication.

Resolved, That a committee on behalf of Council, be appointed, to carry out the objects of the above resolution."

Earnestly hoping for your concurrence with this request of the City Council, and with assurances of the highest regard,

We have the honor to be,

Dear Sir,

Very Respectfully,

Your obd't serv'ts,

WM. KIRKWOOD,
W. ALSTON HAYNE,
JAMES M. EASON. } *Committee.*

CHARLESTON HOTEL, Nov. 23d, 1850.

Gentlemen:—I return my sincere thanks, through you to the City Council for the kind expression of their satisfaction with my oration, delivered on the 21st inst., at their request. I am, perhaps, better aware than they are of its numerous defects. But, such as it is, I surrender to their disposal, in the hope that they, and the public will view it as not pretending to be anything more than imperfect tribute to truth and to Mr. Calhoun.

I have the honor to be,

Most Respectfully,

Your obd't. serv't.,

J. H. HAMMOND.

Messrs. Wm. Kirkwood, W. A. Hayne, James M. Eason.

ORATION.

Faith is an instinct of the human heart. Its strongest, its purest and its noblest instinct—the parent of love and of hope. In all ages and every where, mankind have acknowledged, adored and put their trust in the great Creator and Ruler of the Universe. And descending from the invisible and infinite, to the visible and finite, they have entertained the same sentiments, differing only, in degree, for those of their own species, who have received from heaven an extraordinary endowment of intellect and virtue. The Ancient Heathen deified them. By the early Christians they were enrolled among the Saints. It is a shallow and a base philosophy which can see superstition only, in such customs, and fails to recognize the workings of a profound veneration for the attributes of God, as manifested through his favorite Creations. A better knowledge of the bounds which separate the natural from the supernatural, has taught us in our day to limit our homage, but still it is a deep and pure wisdom which counsels us to submit ourselves, in no grudging spirit, to the guidance of those great Minds that have been appointed to shed light and truth upon the world.

To the honor and praise of South-Carolina it may be said that she has always recognized her prophets, and believed their inspiration. She has aided and sustained them in the performance of their missions, with a

warm and steady confidence, and she has been faithful to their memory. Her loyal reverance for real greatness has ever been a deep,—I might say a religious sentiment,—untinged with superstition, but as profound as it is magnanimous and just.

For no one of her many noble sons has Providence permitted her to evince for so long a period her admiration, her affection and her confidence: for no one has she herself endured such trials: no one has she ever consigned to his last resting place in her bereaved bosom amid such deep and universal grief as him whose life and services we have assembled this day to commemorate. For more than forty years the name of CALHOUN has never been pronounced in South-Carolina without awakening a sensation. For nearly the same period it has been equally familiar and fraught with as deep an interest to every citizen of this wide-spread Union. Few of us here present cannot remember the era when we heard it first. We have grown up from childhood under its mighty influence, and we feel that a spell was broken, a tie of life was sundered forever when it ceased to be a living sound.

The Man is now no more. He has closed his career with us, to begin another in a better world. But what he did and what he said while here, still live, and will live forever in their consequences;—as immortal as the Spirit which has returned to God. How he performed his part on earth it is ours now to consider. And drying our unavailing tears, and burying, for the moment, in the deepest recesses of our bosoms, the love and reverence we bore him, it is our duty to analyse his life with the strict impartiality of a distant posterity; and to bring the thoughts and actions he left behind him

to the great standard of eternal Truth, that we may render complete justice to him, and gather for ourselves and our children the full measure of the lessons which he taught. The living man scorned fulsome adulation: and his living Spirit, if permitted to hover over us now, and to hear our voices and perceive the pulsations of our hearts, will accept no offering that cannot bear the scrutiny of Time and the pure test of Truth.

Mr. CALHOUN was born in the backwoods of South-Carolina, near the close of the Revolutionary War. His early nurture was in the wilderness, and during the heroic age of the Republic. In youth he imbibed but a scant portion of the lore of books, but his converse with the volume of Nature was unlimited: and in the field and forest, by the stream and by the fireside, he was in constant intercourse with those rough but high-strung men, who had challenged oppression at its first step, and were fresh from the battles in which they had won their liberties with their swords. His father, too, was a wise and strong man. For thirty years in the councils of the State, he was as familiar with the strifes of politics, as of arms. In his rude way he penetrated to fundamentals: discovered that the true foundation of government is the welfare of the governed; denounced its excessive action; and opposed the constitution of the Union because it placed the power of laying taxes in the hands of those who did not pay them. Amid such men and such scenes, there was little opportunity for what is commonly called education for the young CALHOUN. But it may be doubted whether, having acquired the use of letters and figures, and been thus furnished with the two great keys of knowledge, there could have been a much bet-

ter training for the future Statesman. Pericles and Alexander were, perhaps, taught but little more by Anaxagoras and Aristotle, than CALHOUN learned from his few books, from nature and such men. In this School he learned to think, which is a vast achievement. And he was furnished with high and noble themes for thought, by those whose partial knowledge of facts led them to discuss chiefly essential principles, to eliminate fundamental truths, and to build on them those lofty theories to which the exigencies of the times gave birth. And thus he was taught, not only the sum and substance of elementary education, but was imbued with that practical philosophy, according to which human affairs are in the main conducted. It is true that thousands have received the same lessons and profited nothing. But we know that seed sown by the wayside and among stones and thorns, is gathered by the birds or is withered or choked up; and it is only when it falls on good ground that it springs up and produces fifty and an hundred fold. It is idle to deny the natural diversity of human intellects. It was due, after all, to the rich soil of CALHOUN's mind that these noble seed took root, and bore abundantly such precious fruit.

It was not until he had passed his eighteenth year that he seriously embarked in the pursuit of Scholastic learning, and the event proved—as perhaps it would in most cases—that no time had been really lost. Perhaps it seldom happens that the bud of the mind is sufficiently matured before this age, to expand naturally and absorb with benefit the direct rays of knowledge, so bright, so piercing and so stimulating. The tender petals eagerly opened at too early a period,

often wither and die under the overpowering light. At eighteen Mr. CALHOUN went to the Academy: at twenty to College: at twenty-two he graduated at Yale: at twenty-five he was admitted to the Bar: at twenty-six he was elected to the Legislature: at twenty-eight to Congress. Thus, though he apparently started late, he nevertheless arrived at the goal far in advance of most of those who reach it. But when he went to the Academy he did not dream over books, any more than he did afterwards over the affairs of life. He had learned before, what many never learn—to think: and to think closely—to the purpose—searching for the principle. Having acquired this mighty power—for it is a power, and the greatest of all—when he did start in his career, he strode onward like a conqueror. Difficulties were mere exercises. Vallies rose in his path and mountains sunk down to a level. First at School: first at College: he rose at once to the front rank at the Bar and in the Legislature: and was assigned a most distinguished position the moment he took his seat in Congress. His course was a stream of light. Men of all classes recognized its brilliancy, and hailed him, not as a meteor, but as a new star risen in the heavens, which had floated without effort into its appointed orbit, and promised long to shed the brightest and most beneficent beams upon the world.

What, we may properly ask, was the secret of this rapid and wonderful success? How was it that this young man, coming but a few years before from the wilderness, late in youth, without knowledge of books, unknown himself, and destitute of powerful friends, should in so short a time, not only win his way into the Great Council of the Confederacy, but be at once con-

ceded a place among the first, and draw to himself the admiration and the hopes of a people?

> "What should it be that thus their faith could bind?
> The power of Thought—the magic of the Mind!"

Mr. CALHOUN first took his seat in Congress at the commencement of the Session of 1811. From that period may be dated his career as a statesman. That career may be properly divided into several epochs, each of which are memorable in the history of our country, and were made memorable in no small degree by the parts which he performed. The first embraces his services in the House of Representatives. The great question of the Session of 1811–'12, was that of war with England. All Europe was then, and had been for twenty years in arms, and that mighty conflict which terminated not long after in the overthrow of Napoleon, and the establishment of the Holy Alliance, was at its height. France and England were the two leading belligerents, and both of them, in utter disregard of neutral rights, had perpetrated unexampled outrages upon us. We had in vain resorted to embargoes and non-importation acts, and at length it became indispensably necessary to our maintaining any position among nations, that we should declare war against one or both of these powers. The direct pecuniary interests of the South had been but slightly affected by these outrages. She had but little commerce to be plundered—few seamen to be impressed. Her great interest involved—and that she felt in every fibre—was the honor of our common country. To vindicate that she went for war, and went for it almost unanimously. South-Carolina took the lead. Her illustrious Representatives Lowndes, Cheves, Williams

and CALHOUN, were the leaders of all those important Committees, whose province it is to propose war, and marshal the resources for carrying it on. And nobly and gloriously did they all perform their duty. Mr. CALHOUN, placed second on the Committee of Foreign Relations, soon became its head by the retirement of the chairman, and before the close of his first Session, he reported and carried through the House, a bill declaring war against Great Britain; and, throughout the momentous conflict, undaunted in courage and infinite in resources, he stood forth the leading champion of every measure for its vigorous prosecution. Young as he was, he shrunk from no opponent in that Congress, never before or since equalled for its assemblage of talent. He surrendered nothing and shunned no responsibility. In the darkest and most perilous hour of the war, when Napoleon had fallen, and England was free to turn the whole of her armament on us; when the Eastern States, not content with denouncing the war through their presses, and from their platforms and their pulpits, had assailed in every form the credit of the Government: had paralyzed all the financial operations of the country, and caused a general suspension of the Southern Banks: had given valuable "aid and comfort to the enemy" by loans of specie, and were conspiring to withdraw from the Confederacy and make peace for themselves:—in that desponding hour, when all seemed lost, he did not falter for an instant. "The great cause" he said "will never be yielded—no, never! never! I hear the future audibly announced in the past,—in the splendid victories over the Guerriere, the Java, and the Macedonian. Opinion is power. The charm of British naval invincibility is gone."

Mr. CALHOUN's course throughout the war can never fail of the admiration and applause of future times; and that war was a turning point in the history of the world. It established a competitor with England for the trident of the ocean, whose triumph is inevitable. And just and necessary as it was, and glorious as its result, it gave rise in the end to questions in this country, which no human sagacity could have anticipated, whose solution, yet in the womb of time, may be of far greater import than the dominion of the seas.

Mr. CALHOUN entered Congress as a member of the Republican Party, as distinguished from the Federal, and throughout his service in the House, acted with it in the main. But he gave many and early proofs that his was a temperament which could never "give up to party what was meant for mankind." Following his illustrious Colleague,—who yet survives to our love and veneration, with his powerful intellect unimpaired, and his devotion to his native soil more ardent and self-sacrificing, if possible, than ever,—he warmly advocated a large addition to the navy, at an early period of warlike preparations, and ever after consistently and earnestly sustained that most important arm of defence and supporter of the State. The Republican Party, under Mr. Jefferson, had with a narrow policy condemned the navy. But amphibious man never attains half his national greatness, until his domain on the water equals that upon the land—until the terror of his prowess makes his home upon the deep as secure as on the mountains, and the products of his industry float undisturbed on every tide.

At this early period also, Mr. CALHOUN took his stand against the Restrictive System, which had been

so great a favourite with Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, as a substitute for war. He denounced it as unsound in policy, and wholly unsuited to the genius of our people; and he opposed it vigorously, until it fell beneath his blows. But it may well be questioned, whether at that time his opposition was at all enlightened by those great principles of Free Trade, then so little known, which it was the glory of his later life, to develope and sustain under such trying circumstances. He then opposed the Restrictive System as a war measure, and demonstrated that it was not only inefficient, but injurious. Neither then, nor when the import duties were re-adjusted at the close of the war, did he appear to have perceived the dangers which lurked under the protection which this system gave to manufactures, nor those which followed such protection when specifically given by the direct action of the Government. For in the debate in 1814, while Mr. Webster, now the great champion of protection, declared "he was an enemy to rearing manufactures, or any other interest in a hot bed, and never wished to see a Sheffield or a Birmingham in this country:" Mr. CALHOUN said "as to the manufacturing interest, in regard to which some fear has been expressed, the resolution voted by the House yesterday was a strong pledge that it would not suffer manufactures to be unprotected in case of a repeal of the Restrictive System. He hoped that at all times, and under every policy, they would be protected with due care." And, in 1816, he advocated without any note of caution, the bill introduced by another distinguished Carolinian, long since snatched from us by a premature death, but whose genius and virtues—whose lofty character and inestimable

services can never be forgotten; a bill which distinctly recognized the protective principle, and introduced perhaps its most oppressive feature. The truth is that at that day political economy was in its infancy. Free Trade was most commonly understood to mean merely the freedom of the seas. The most sagacious intellects of our country—Mr. Webster perhaps excepted, had apparently no apprehensions of the evils of the false theory of protection as applied to us; and that abominable system, since called "the American," it had entered into no man's imagination to conceive. Mr. CALHOUN, at a later period, so far in advance of his age, was at that epoch, the embodiment of the spirit of the times, and among its most able and effective expounders.

At the crisis of the war, when the credit of the government was prostrate, an United States Bank was proposed by the administration, and supported by the Republican Party. This Mr. CALHOUN opposed and defeated; though in a modified form, it would finally have passed the House, but for the casting vote of Mr. Cheves. It was, however, on account of the extraordinary character of the proposed Bank, that Mr. CALHOUN resisted it, and not apparently from any doubt of the policy or constitutionality of a Bank chartered by Congress. In fact, he had himself previously proposed a Bank to be established in the District of Columbia, with the express view of getting rid of certain constitutional scruples felt by others; and he was the responsible author of the Bank of 1816, whose powerful efforts to prolong its own existence, so fiercely agitated the whole union twenty years later, and ended in consequences so disastrous not only to its own stock-

holders, but to the country. From Mr. CALHOUN's subsequent declarations, it is certain that in his maturest years, he regarded the whole Banking system as at present organized as a stupendous evil, and he emphatically declared, that its power, "if not diminished, must terminate in its own destruction, or an entire revolution in our social and political system:" And that of all Banks, he regarded a mere Government Bank as the most dangerous, may be safely inferred from the fact, that neither the ties of party, nor the entreaties of the administration, nor the exigencies of the most critical period of the war, could prevent him from vigorously opposing such a Bank, though not then hostile to an U. States Bank. He advocated the Bank of 1816, as indispensably necessary for the restoration of the currency, and to the last he believed that no other expedient could have effected that great object. He avoided the constitutional question, by assuming that so long as the Government received Bank notes at all as money, it was bound to "regulate their value," and for that purpose a Bank was "necessary and proper." He said however, even then, that "as a question *de novo*, he would be decidedly against a Bank;" and when in 1837 he thought it could be done with safety, he took an active an efficient part in excluding all Bank notes from the Treasury of the United States.

During the Session of 1816, arose another of those great questions, which may be said to have had their origin in the war, and which have since so divided and agitated our country. Mr. Jefferson had recognized the power of Congress to appropriate money for Internal Improvements in the case of the Cumberland Road, and in 1808 Mr. Gallatin, his Secretary of war, had

made a report, recommending a stupendous system. It was not until after the war, the expenses of which had been enormously increased by the costs of transportation, that the subject attracted the serious attention of the whole country. Mr. Calhoun brought forward and carried in 1816, a bill appropriating the bonus and dividends of the United Bank to Internal Improvements. This bill was vetoed as unconstitutional by Mr. Madison, to the surprise of all, and most especially of its author, who believed he was carrying out the views entertained by Madison, and suggested in his annual Message. In 1818, Mr. Calhoun, as Secretary of War, made a Report on Roads and Canals, embracing views and recommending measures fully as extensive as those of Mr. Gallatin. On none of these occasions, did Mr. Calhoun express his opinion as to the constitutional power of the Federal Government to carry on Internal Improvements. But if his opinions may be inferred from those of his most intimate and confidential friends—from the celebrated Message of Mr. Monroe in 1823, and the equally celebrated speech of Mr. McDuffie shortly after, it must be conceded that, at that time, he believed the power of the Government to lay taxes, and appropriate the proceeds, was limited only by the injunction that they should be applied to the "common defence and general welfare." This doctrine in every way so fatal in our political system, has since received its severest blows from his hands; and, in 1838, Mr. Calhoun declared that one of the most essential steps to be taken, in order to restore our government to its original purity—then the great and sole object of his political life—was to "put a final stop to Internal Improvements by Congress."

With the Session of 1816–17 closed Mr. CALHOUN's services in the House of Representatives; and here also terminated an epoch in his career as a Statesman. He had more than fulfilled the high expectations entertained of him when he entered Congress. His reputation for talent had increased with every intellectual effort he had made. And his ability,—now universally admitted to be of the very highest order, his well-tried patriotism, his unflinching moral courage, the loftiness and liberality of all his views and sentiments, and the immaculate purity of his life, gave him a position in the public councils and in the opinion of the country, second to no one of that illustrious band whom the greatest crisis in affairs since the revolution—"the second war of Independence"—had brought upon the stage.

In reviewing Mr. CALHOUN's political course up to this period, if with the sternness of the historian, we brush aside the splendid halo that surrounds it, and call to our aid the experience of a third of a century of rapid progress: above all, if we examine it by the effulgent light which he himself, more than all other men, has since shed upon the Federal Constitution, and judge it by those rigid and severe tests which he has taught us, we cannot fail to perceive that brilliant, useful and glorious, as it was to his country and himself, his views in many most important particulars were essentially erroneous; and that he assisted powerfully in giving currency to opinions and building up systems that have proved seriously injurious to the South, and probably to the stability of the existing Union. These I have not hesitated to point out. It was due to truth, to history and to him.

It has been customary to apologize for these errors, by saying that they were the errors of youth. But Mr. Calhoun had no youth to our knowledge. He sprung into the arena like Minerva from the head of Jove, fully grown and clothed in armour: a man every inch himself, and able to contend with any other man. A severe moralist would point to them as conspicuous proofs of the fallibility of our nature, since the deepest devotion both to the Union and his native section and the most perfect purity of purpose, combined with the subtlest intellectual acumen and the profoundest generalization could not save him from them. There may be much truth and wisdom in this view. But there are reasons why Mr. Calhoun should have fallen at that time into the opinions that he did, which properly considered would remove every shadow of suspicion from his motives, if any has ever been seriously entertained, and almost wholly excuse the most sagacious of men who laid no claim to inspiration.

Although there were from the commencement of the Government two parties, one of whom contended for a strict and the other for a latitudinarian construction of the Constitution, a review of the practical questions which arose between them would show that few or none of them were of a sectional bearing. The Alien and Sedition Laws, which produced the greatest excitement of any internal question, had no such tendency. The Funding of the Domestic Debt might have been so accidentally; but no question necessarily and permanently sectional attracted serious notice until after the second war. In fact, under the administrations of the earlier Presidents, all those sectional jealousies which had displayed themselves so conspicuously during the

Confederation, and which are so prominent in the debates of the Convention that framed the Constitution, had been lulled to sleep: and a large proportion of the ablest Southern men were Federalists. The great questions which did agitate the country, on which elections turned, and parties really, though not altogether, nominally divided off, were external, not internal questions. Our Colonial habits still predominated, and we looked abroad for our dangers: for our enemies and our friends. English, French and Spanish negociations: Jay's Treaty: the squabble with the Directory: the acquisition of Louisiana: the terrible wars of Europe: the aggressions on our neutral rights: and finally the embargo—non-importation—non-intercourse laws and war with England:—these were the great and deeply interesting subjects which absorbed men's minds and colored all their political opinions. The Constitution was overlooked and violated by both parties; and I believe it may be said that on no question of a constitutional character were party lines stringently drawn after the election of Mr. Jefferson. Mr. Monroe declared on his accession, that we were "all Federalists—all Republicans."

It was under these circumstances and at a period when, above all others, an ardent and patriotic mind would be least disposed to contemplate sectional interests or stickle about constitutional scruples, that Mr. Calhoun entered Congress. It was, indeed, the imperative duty of the patriot then to discard all mere sectional considerations; and, perhaps, to give the most liberal construction to the Constitution, to enable the ship of State to meet and ride out the storms which threatened to engulph it. The difficulties were im-

mense. Mr. CALHOUN, placed at once in a high and responsible position, and taking, as was said at the time, the war upon his shoulders, was absorbed during his first three Sessions in devising measures to meet its pressing exigencies; and during the last three in endeavoring to dissipate its injurious effects upon the currency, commerce and industry of the country. And considering the history of the past: the conduct of parties on internal constitutional questions: the habitual disregard of strict construction by the Republican leaders: the acquiescence of older and very able men of all sections in the constitutionality of the Bank, the Tariff and Internal Improvements, it is not at all to be wondered at, nor to be severely condemned, that in the universal confusion and the burning glow of his broad patriotism, so fanned by current events, he should fail to look at the sectional bearing of propositions, or even of constitutional constructions. No man—not one in our wide confederacy—North or South—foresaw what was coming out of the convulsions of the war; and the measures adopted to ease down the country to a state of peace, and prepare her for a prosperous career under circumstances so greatly different as were those of 1815–17, from any she had yet encountered. Carpings and croakings there were of course, and prophecies of evil in abundance. But the results baffled all predictions: or at least verified so little of what any had foretold, as to place the wisest seer on no higher tripod than that of a lucky fortune-teller. Mr. CALHOUN never croaked or carped. And if he erred in straying from the narrow, but only true path of rigid constitutional construction, he may well be forgiven for following precedents that were almost

consecrated—the examples of nearly all with whom he acted—and the impulses of a generous, confiding, and wide extended love of country.

Soon after Mr. Monroe's accession to the Presidency, Mr. CALHOUN received the appointment of Secretary of War, and took his seat in the Cabinet in December, 1817, where he remained until March, 1825. This period embraced the second epoch of his career. The future biographer will find in it much that will be interesting to relate, but on an occasion like this it may be passed over without any minute examination. From the commencement of the war it had been discovered that the internal organization of the War Department was so defective, that it was almost impossible to conduct its affairs with due efficiency. It was in vain that three different Secretaries were in succession at its head during the war, and a fourth appointed at its close. When Mr. CALHOUN took charge of it, nearly three years after, he found unsettled accounts to the amount of forty millions, and the greatest confusion in every branch. In a remarkably short period he introduced a perfect organization, in which all the details were so thoroughly and judiciously systematized, that no material changes have been made to this day. He reduced the unsettled accounts to a few millions, which were not susceptible of liquidation, and against incessant and powerful opposition curtailed the discretionary expenses nearly one half, while at the same time the efficiency of the Army was greatly increased, and his own popularity in it grew with every reform, and to the last day of his administration.

Many of Mr. CALHOUN's best friends had advised him not to accept this appointment. They knew the

apparently insuperable difficulties of re-organizing that Department which had baffled so many able men. They thought that his mind was of a cast too abstract and metaphysical to cope with the practical details of the Military System, and were apprehensive lest his brilliant reputation might be clouded. They did not remember that if real genius is not universal, both war and politics are but the concretes of Philosophy: that in ancient times these pursuits were almost invariably united: that the greatest of metaphysicians was the founder of the science of Politics, and tutored the greatest warrior of antiquity: that Bacon presided in the House of Lords: that Carnot "organized victory:" that, in short, though politicians and soldiers may spring up every day, and strut their hour upon the stage, no one can be a statesman or a general who has not analyzed the structure of the human mind, and learned to touch the remotest springs of human action.

High as Mr. Calhoun's legislative talent had been rated, he had not been long in the War Department before his administrative talent was regarded as equal, if not superior; and he rose so rapidly in the estimation of his countrymen, that early in Mr. Monroe's second term, when he was only forty years of age and had been but little more than ten years in the Federal Councils, he was nominated for the Presidency by the large and influential State of Pennsylvania. He subsequently consented to have his name withdrawn in favor of Gen. Jackson. He was then nominated for the Vice Presidency—was elected by a large majority, and took his seat as President of the Senate in 1825. In regard to his direct connection with that body as its presiding officer, it is perhaps sufficient to say that

on all occasions he fully sustained his reputation. No incident of lasting importance occurred to elicit any extraordinary display of peculiar qualities of mind or temperament, until near the close of his first term. But the period of that term constitutes a most important era in the annals of our country, and also in the life of Mr. CALHOUN. And hence may be dated the third and last epoch in his career.

I have already adverted to the fact, that the Republican party had long strayed from the straight and narrow path of constitutional construction in which it first set out. The events of the war had so utterly prostrated and disgraced the Federal Party, that at its close that party was dissolved, and the very name of Federalist almost universally repudiated. The check of opposition removed, the Republican Party—with but few exceptions—fell headlong into the very slough in which their adversaries had foundered. They had every thing in their own hands, and "feeling power they forgot right." A new party in the mean time grew up, which afterwards assumed the name of "National Republican," and more lately of "Whig," absorbing most of the old Federalists, and a portion of the old Republicans. Of this party was Mr. Adams—a converted federalist—who was elected President in 1824, by the House of Representatives, through the instrumentality of Mr. Clay, who became his Secretary of State. The manner of Mr. Adams' election: the extreme federal doctrines of his first Message; and, above all perhaps, the exigencies of opposition awakened the genuine republicans to some consciousness of their great and long cherished errors. They united on Gen. Jackson as their candidate for the Presidency. Their ma-

nifestoes breathed the true spirit of the republicanism of '98; and the Constitution became apparently the favourite study of those who had come into public life subsequently to that period. It is said Mr. CALHOUN avowed that until this time he had never fully analyzed and understood the Constitution. This may be readily believed without referring to the instances already mentioned, in which he had departed from it. He had always been, up to that time, in the majority. Majorities do not rely on Constitutions. Their reliance is on numbers and the strong arm. It is not to be expected of them to study, and it seems to be almost impossible for them to comprehend Constitutions, whose express purpose is to limit their power, and hedge in their privileges. It is minorities who look closely into Constitutions, for they are their shield and tower of safety. Mr. CALHOUN had, doubtless, read the Constitution attentively, and mastered its general principles. But there were parts he had not scrutinized, and a deep and vital spirit running through the whole, which he had never yet imbibed, nor had any of the younger men up to that period. In fact, a new style of constitutional questions now arose: or rather the progress of events had developed new and deeply important bearings in old questions. It now became manifest, for the first time since the Constitution had gone into operation, that it might be so construed as to oppress and ruin one section for the benefit of another. And it was also clearly seen that the South was the doomed section, and the chief instrument of destruction a protective Tariff.

It was well known that Mr. Hamilton, as early as 1791, had with great power advocated the protection

of manufactures, and that duties had been imposed with that view; but they were so extremely moderate as to be of little benefit to that interest, and caused no alarm in others. The duties had been increased under every subsequent administration for the sake of revenue, and had been doubled during the war. When in 1816 it became necessary to reduce the war duties, the question arose to what extent they were to be retained for the protection of manufactures, and some of them were adjusted for that purpose at a high comparative rate, as I have already stated. These duties were increased in 1820; and, in 1824, the manufacturers again came forward with exorbitant demands, which were acceded to. Then, for the first time in thirty years, and by but a few voices, the constitutional power to protect manufactures was questioned. It was now obvious that the protected interest had "an appetite which grew on what it fed on;" and that in this country, in every period of about four years, for reasons which it is unnecessary to dwell on here, it required new and enormous impositions.

Mr. Adams had warmly recommended the protective tariff, and Mr. Clay giving it the *ad captandum* title of the "American system," claimed to be its first champion, and made it the leading question in the Presidential canvass, from 1825 to 1829. The South had opposed it with great vigour and much unanimity in 1824; because, on the principle of communism, it taxed the agricultural interest to support the manufacturing: and, inasmuch as we furnished two-thirds of the exports that paid for the imports on which the duties were levied, it was fully believed and pretty clearly demonstrated, that our small section paid near two-

thirds of the revenue of the Government, besides paying the manufacturers an enhanced price on the protected articles we consumed. Some of the Eastern States opposed it also, because it injured commerce and navigation, but they ultimately came in to its support. The Western and Middle States were decidedly for it. To secure their support, and yet retain the support of the South, Gen. Jackson gave the equivocal pledge that he would sustain a "Judicious Tariff," which in the South was construed to mean a constitutional Revenue Tariff; and, elsewhere, to mean a Protective Tariff.

In 1828, at the end of four years, as was usual, a new tariff bill was brought forward in Congress. It was blotched and bloated with the corrupt bids of a majority of the Jackson party itself for manufacturers votes, to be paid in gold wrung from the already overburdened South. And so extravagant were these bids that the protective interests hesitated to accept a bribe so monstrous, lest they should over-shoot the mark, and fall under public odium. It was thought at one time that the vote in the Senate would be a tie, and the fate of the bill would depend on the casting vote of the presiding officer. Mr. Calhoun was then Vice President, and a candidate for re-election on the same ticket with Gen. Jackson, whose election depended entirely on the support of Mr. Calhoun's friends. It was confidently believed that save Gen. Jackson, there was no one so popular throughout the Union as Mr. Calhoun, and his accession to the Presidency, on the retirement of Gen. Jackson, was considered almost certain. It was known that he was opposed to this bill, and he was now appealed to as the supporter of Gen. Jackson, and can-

didate of the Republican Party for the Vice Presidency, and out of regard to his own future prospects, not to give his casting vote against it, but to leave the chair, as was not at all unusual, and allow the bill to take the chances of the Senate. Mr. CALHOUN knew the full import of his reply to this appeal. If he not only refused to pledge himself to a "Judicious Tariff," but openly and unequivocally took his stand against the whole protective system, now overwhelmingly popular, he surrendered, in all human probability, every prospect of the Presidency, and must pass the remainder of his life in combatting with a small, and almost hopeless minority, not for power, not for glory, but for justice, and, in a measure, for the existence of the South. He was thus, in a critical moment, called on to make at once, and forever, a decision which was to shape his destiny, and perhaps the destiny of a whole people. He did not hesitate. He had now mastered the Constitution; he also saw clearly the fatal tendency of the prominent measures brought forward at the close of the war; and casting behind him all the glorious labours of the past, and all the brilliant prospects of the future—holding in one hand the Constitution, and in the other truth, justice, and the violated rights of his native land, he took his post with his little band; waged in the breach a truceless war of two and twenty years, and perished there.

Neither ancient nor modern annals furnish a nobler example of heroic sacrifice of self. Peel yielded to popular demands, and exchanged party for public gratitude and influence. Burke gave up friends, but power smiled upon him. Self-banished Aristides had satiated his ambition. Cato and Brutus, perished in the shock

But in the early prime of life, midway his yet unchecked career—with the greatest of ambition's prizes but one bound ahead, Mr. CALHOUN stopped and turned aside, to lift from the dust the Constitution of his country, trampled, soiled and rent; and bearing it aloft, consecrated himself, his life, his talents, his hopes, to the arduous, but sacred task, of handing it down to other ages as pure as it was received from the Fathers of the Revolution. Glorious and not bootless struggle. The Constitution has not been purified. It never will be; but its principles have been made immortal, and will survive and flourish, though it shall itself be torn to atoms and given to the winds.

The magnitude of Mr. CALHOUN's sacrifice may be more readily appreciated than the difficulties of his undertaking. The diseases of the body politic had not only become deeply seated, but were complicated and peculiar. At the bottom was the now established doctrine that the majority had the unquestionable and the indefeasible right to place its own construction on the Constitution. On this arose not only the Tariff, but the Internal Improvement System, which had completely triumphed. Immense sums, the proceeds of high duties, were annually appropriated for the benefit of the Tariff States; while the United States Bank, by its control over the government funds, concentrated the exchanges at the North, and made the protected section the heart of the financial system of the Union. Thus was formed a combination of sectional interests, sustained by a sectional majority under a corrupted Constitution, all bearing with fatal and relentless aim on the devoted South, while behind them another question, purely sectional and having

nearly the same geographical lines, was easily to be discerned rearing its monstrous crest, and portending dangers, in comparison to which all others sunk to insignificance. Among a homogeneous people, majorities and minorities frequently change places. Indeed it is natural, and where discussion and free action are allowed, it is inevitable that they should. But where they are sectional, even more than where they are founded on classes, vital and antagonistic interests make the change a Revolution, such as rarely happens without bloodshed. A sectional majority remote, arrogant, and fatally bent on maintaining its supremacy and promoting its peculiar interests, never listens to warning or to reason; and the minority, if it has not the courage or the strength to tender an issue of force, is soon corrupted, divided and necessarily enslaved. Mr. CALHOUN could not have failed to perceive all these difficulties, and in abandoning under such circumstances his high position in the majority, to unite his fortunes irrevocably with the weaker section, he exhibited an example, almost without a parallel, of disinterested patriotism and lion-hearted courage; and of that "unshaken confidence in the Providence of God," which, in his latest moments, he declared to be his consolation and support.

Henceforth he is no longer to be viewed as the favorite child of genius and of fortune. His path is no longer strewed with garlands and his footsteps greeted with applause. Toiling in the deepest anxiety, yet happily for himself, with the unfailing hopefulness of his nature, to accomplish his Herculean task, he encounters at every step the deadliest hostility. He is assailed on all sides and from every section—even from

his own. Envy and malice shoot their long poisoned arrows, and ignorance and corruption shower every missile on him; and it yet remains to be decided, and depends in no small degree upon the issue of the great struggle now approaching its crisis, whether he shall go down to posterity pourtrayed in the colors of the Gracchi of the Patricians, or the Gracchi of the People.

The Tariff Bill of 1828 passed the Senate by a majority of one vote, and became a law. So exorbitant were its exactions, that out of an import of $64,000,000 it carried $32,000,000 into the Treasury. Mr. Calhoun, who had announced his intention to vote against it, was loud in his denunciations of it and of the protective system; and at the next succeeding Session of our State Legislature, an exposition was presented by the Committee of Federal Relations, drawn up by himself, in which the whole subject was elaborately discussed. And he then suggested as the ultimate remedy, a resort to the State Veto—or Nullification as it is commonly called. It was not, however, Mr. Calhoun's opinion that the remedy should be immediately applied. It was certain that Gen. Jackson and himself would be elected President and Vice President in a few months, for as yet war had not been openly declared against him, his support being essential to the success of the Jackson Party. He thought it prudent to await a full explanation of Gen. Jackson's "judicious tariff;" and was not without hope that through his influence the protective system might be broken up. Besides, the period was near at hand when the Public Debt would be discharged, and no shadow of reason would remain for imposing high duties for revenue purposes. But the first message of Gen. Jackson

removed every doubt as to his policy, and shewed clearly that he meant to sustain the Tariff interest. He also produced a breach between himself and Mr. CALHOUN as soon as the prominent Executive appointments were confirmed, by reviving an old controversy supposed to have been settled many years before. It was evident that Mr. CALHOUN had been doomed from the moment he had definitely taken ground against the Protective System, and war was now made openly upon him.

Gen. Jackson did indeed denounce the Bank; and early in his first term he vetoed the Maysville Bill, and proposed a limit to appropriations for Internal Improvement: a limit, however, that was uncertain and discretionary with the President, and soon abandoned by himself. At the same time, he suggested a monstrous scheme for the permanent distribution among the States of the surplus revenue arising from the imposts, thus clearly showing that he would uphold Protection, even after the payment of the Public Debt, and perpetuate the system forever by corrupting the States.

Seeing then that there was no hope of any change in the action of the Federal Government, in regard to the Tariff and its most objectionable cognate measures, the question as to what remedy a State could apply, was seriously agitated in South-Carolina. Mr. CALHOUN proposed Nullification, and a considerable majority declared for it almost at once. But it required a vote of two-thirds in the Legislature to call a Convention to enact a Nullifying Ordinance. A warm and even bitter contest on this question was waged among the people of this State, until the October election in 1832,

when the requiste majority was obtained. Gov. Hamilton immediately summoned the Legislature to meet —a Convention was called, and in November of that year, all the Acts of Congress imposing duties, and especially the Acts of 1828 and 1832, were nullified and declared void, and of no effect in the State of South-Carolina. The Tariff Act of 1832 was named, because as was customary every four years, the duties had been revised that year, and shortly before. They had been revised with special reference to the payment of the public debt, which was then virtually accomplished. The odious scheme of permanently distributing the surplus revenue had not been carried, though there was every prospect that it would be ultimately; but while the amount of revenue and average of duties were very slightly reduced, by a large increase of the free list, comprising articles most useful to the manufacturers, their particular interest were in fact much advanced, and the tariff rendered more unequal and more oppressive, than by the Act of 1828. Yet it was announced by all parties that this was a final and permanent adjustment of the protective system, and that the South could never expect any amelioration of it.

Mr. Calhoun was still Vice-President of the United States, but Gen. Hayne having been recalled from the Senate and placed in the Executive Chair at this crisis, Mr. Calhoun was chosen in December to fill his place, and resigning his office, took his seat in the Senate. Gen. Jackson had immediately after the passage of the Ordinance issued his famous Proclamation, denouncing the proceedings of South-Carolina as treasonable, nullification as unconstitutional and revolutionary, and

even denying, for the first time, I believe, in the history of the country, the right of a State to secede. In fact, his doctrines went the full length of negativing all State Rights, and consolidating despotic power in the hands of the Federal Government. And this was followed by a message to Congress, demanding to be clothed with almost unlimited power to carry his views into effect by force of arms. The crisis was perilous. We were apparently on the verge of civil war, for South-Carolina on these hostile demonstrations flew to arms. It was expected generally that Mr. CALHOUN and most of the South-Carolina Delegation would be arrested at Washington. But this was not done. A debate, however, arose in the Senate on the Bill embracing the recommendations of the President—commonly called the Force Bill—which will go down to future times and live an imperishable monument of the patriotism and courage—the wisdom and foresight, the genius and eloquence of Mr. CALHOUN. His speech is not surpassed by any recorded in modern or in ancient times, not even by that of the great Athenian on the Crown.

This debate can never be read without its being seen and felt that Mr. Webster, his only opponent worthy to be named, gifted as he is universally acknowledged to be with talents of the highest order, and remarkable even more for his power of reasoning than for his lofty declamation, was on this memorable occasion a dwarf in a giant's grasp. He was prostrated on every ground that he assumed. And if logic, building on undoubted facts can demonstrate any moral proposition, then Mr. CALHOUN made as clear as mathematical solution his theory of our Government

and the right of each State to judge of infractions of the Constitution, and to determine the mode and measure of redress. When the dust of ages shall have covered alike the men, the passions and the interests of that day, this speech of Mr. CALHOUN's will remain to posterity, not merely a triumphant vindication of the State of South-Carolina, but a tower-light to shed the brightest, purest and truest rays upon the path of every Confederacy of Free States that shall arise on the earth.

It is not probable that State Interposition will ever again be resorted to while this Union continues. More decisive measures will be preferred. But if the Federal Government was created by a constitutional compact between Sovereign States, binding between those only that ratified it in Conventions: if only certain enumerated or defined powers were entrusted to it in its various departments, and all powers not granted it, explicitly reserved to the States entering into the compact: and if that compact appointed no special tribunal to decide when the Government thus created transcended the powers granted to it and trenched on those reserved by the States, it follows irresistibly that the States themselves must decide such questions: for if the Federal Government by any or all of its Departments assumes as an exclusive right this transcendant power, then is that Government sovereign over those by whom it was created—the Conventions of the people of the States; the limits to its powers, supposed to have been fixed in the most sacred and binding form, were only suggestions addressed to its discretion, and the whole mass of rights supposed to have been reserved absolutely to the States, have no existence save

from its grace and will. If, however, the States have by virtue of their Sovereignty—and if it be historically true that at the time of the compact, each State was separately sovereign and remains so still,—then, if each State has a right to judge, in Convention, of infractions of the Constitution, it follows with equal certainty that such State must determine for itself the mode and measure of resistance to be applied to such infraction, or else the right itself is a nullity. Two modes only of resistance are to be found. The one, to withdraw altogether from the violated compact: the other to nullify the unconstitutional act and compel the Federal Government to repeal it, or obtain a new grant of power from another Convention of the States. The Federal Government, or two thirds of the States, may call a Convention for that purpose. A single State cannot. It must therefore surrender, not only its reserved rights, but its entire Sovereignty, or resist if need be singly and independently, as South-Carolina did.

In recommending Nullification to the State of South-Carolina in preference to Secession, which at that time it was almost universally agreed that a State had a clear right to resort to, Mr. CALHOUN was mainly influenced by that deep, long cherished, and I might almost say superstitious attachment to the Union which marked every act of his career from its commencement to its very close. For if there is one feature most prominent in Nullification as a remedial measure, it is that it is conservative of the Union—of that Constitutional Union, which is the only Union a patriot can desire to preserve. It was also recommended by the authority of the leaders and founders of the great Republican Party, Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, who had pro-

posed this identical measure to Virginia and Kentucky in the memorable crisis of 1798.

The Force Bill was passed, but was immediately nullified by South-Carolina, and remains a dead letter in our State. In the meantime, however, both the Administration and opposition in Congress, had become alarmed, and introduced bills for reducing the Tariff, notwithstanding the loud declaration of finality* by both at the preceding Session. Ultimately the famous Compromise Bill was proposed by Mr. Clay, the great leader of the Protectionists, and was accepted by Mr. Calhoun and his colleagues from South-Carolina. It became a law and settled this perilous controversy. By this act, in consideration of twelve years being allowed for a gradual reduction of the duties, the principle of Protection was forever surrendered, and it was provided that at the end of that period no more revenue should ever be collected than was necessary for the wants of an economical Government.

No pains have been spared by the majority to detract from the merit of the signal triumph achieved by South-Carolina and Mr. Calhoun in this arduous and memorable contest. More undoubtedly might have been gained. The term of the reduction was a long one: the final enforcement of the Compromise was not, as was afterwards proven, sufficiently secured: and the Force Bill was passed—a monument of the subserviency and degradation of an American Congress. The triumph might have been more complete; but, shared with many, far less glorious, had South-Carolina been sustained by her sister States of the South. Most of these had denounced the Protective System as unconstitutional and oppressive, and pledged

themselves to resist it with as much show of indignation as South-Carolina. But when the hour of actual conflict came, they shrunk from her side, and repudiated the remedy. She took her station in the breach alone, and single-handed won a victory whose renown can never fade, when she extorted from an overwhelming and arrogant majority—in the teeth of declarations but a few months old—a full surrender of the Protective principle, under sanction of a formal and peculiarly solemn act of Congress.

Mr. CALHOUN had now wholly devoted himself to the reformation of the Federal Government, and this first great step accomplished—although the struggle had so completely isolated him that out of the South-Carolina delegation he had scarcely a supporter in either House of Congress—he moved onwards in his course, unbent and undismayed. His personal fortunes were apparently forever shipwrecked,

> ——— "But he beat the surges under him,
> And rode upon their backs."

His broad vision swept the whole circle of the political system, and he noted every plague spot of corruption on it. He made a powerful attack on Executive patronage in a Report to the Senate, of which an immense number of copies were printed by that body. He struck a fatal blow at Executive usurpation by demonstrating that all the discretionary powers are vested in Congress, and that the other Departments can do nothing "necessary and proper to carry out" their constitutional powers, without the previous sanction of the law. He kept a steady eye on the Surplus Revenue, which from various causes accumulated beyond all expectation, notwithstanding the reduction of

duties under the Compromise Act. As this surplus must now be temporary, he thought it better to divide it among the States, than to keep it as a permanent fund, or to waste it in profligate and corrupting expenditures. It was a cardinal maxim with him to keep the Government poor. History shows that the most fatal vices of all Governments originate in the command of too much money. To lessen the necessary amount of revenue by curtailing expenditures, was an essential feature of Mr. CALHOUN's great scheme of reform. He did not fail to oppose every improper appropriation, and defeated many; and finally succeeded in carrying his proposition to relieve the dangerous plethora of the Treasury, by depositing the Surplus with the States.

Some of the diseases of the Government Mr. CALHOUN thought it would be dangerous to heal too suddenly. One of these was the United States Bank, whose charter expired in 1836. Gen. Jackson had, in 1832, vetoed a re-charter of it; and in October, 1833, he removed the Government funds from its coffers, and deposited them in the State Banks, without any authority from Congress.

Mr. CALHOUN condemned this high handed and unconstitutional measure, and believing that the Bank could not be closed immediately, without producing a financial convulsion—so completely had it brought the whole financial and mercantile system under its power—proposed to give it twelve years more to wind up its affairs. But he did not let the occasion pass, without clearly indicating his views of the Banking system. He said the Government ought, at a proper time, to be entirely divorced from all connection with

Banks. "I have great doubts," he said, "if doubts they may be called, of the soundness and tendency of the whole system, in all its modifications. I have great fears that it will be found hostile to liberty, and the advance of civilization, fatally hostile to liberty in our country, where the system exists in its worst and most dangerous form." His proposition failed, however, and the Bank fell headlong into ruin, dragging thousands of victims after it, and spreading deep gloom over the whole country. It is but just, however, to say, that this disastrous catastrophe, which did not occur until some years later, was due more to its own violent and reckless efforts to extend its influence and operations, to maintain its existence, and to revenge its defeat, than to the measures of the Government, unfair as they were.

Early in 1837, shortly after Mr. Van Buren's elevation to the Presidency, the financial crisis which Mr. CALHOUN had long predicted, came. In the crash, the Banks suspended payments almost every where, and among them, the deposit Banks. By a joint resolution introduced by Mr. CALHOUN in 1816, the notes of suspended Banks could not be received into the Treasury, and by a clause in the recent Deposit Act, such Banks could not be used as Fiscal Agents. Thus, suddenly, and in a most unexpected manner, the divorce between the Government and Banks was fully effected, and believing that no injury could now result from keeping them separate forever, Mr. CALHOUN cordially and powerfully supported Mr. Van Buren's recommendation, at the Extra Session of 1837, to re-organize the Treasury Department on the Sub-Treasury plan. To the Bill introduced, Mr. CALHOUN moved an amend-

ment, that specie only should be received in public dues, and made this the *sine qua non* of his support. After many defeats and great difficulties in a contest that lasted six or seven years, this Sub-Treasury system, with the specie feature, finally prevailed, and has been found to work admirably. It has put an end to every prospect of the re-charter of an United States Bank, and that once alarming source of danger to our Institutions, may be said to be extinct.

For the part which Mr. CALHOUN took on this occasion, he was subjected to a new and tremendous torrent of abuse and calumny. His course since 1833 had lead him to act mostly with the opposition, who were endeavoring to check the march of Executive usurpation. This opposition was composed chiefly of the surviving Federalists, and the recruits they had made from time to time, and now assumed the name of the Whig Party, and on this very question received a large accession of State Rights men, and even Nullifiers, whose attachments and hostilities to men, and to subordinate measures, blinded them apparently to principles. With all these, Mr. CALHOUN parted, when he took his ground in favor of the Sub-Treasury. He was charged with deserting his Party when he had refused openly in the Senate to be called a Whig, and had again and again declared that he did not belong to either of the leading parties, but would act indifferently with whichever might be promoting his views of the Constitution and true policy of the Country. The charge of inconsistency now so warmly urged against him, had been incessantly reiterated from 1828, and was continued, more or less, to the hour of his death. It is surprising, that in an enlightened age like

this, such narrow notions of consistency should so extensively prevail. The situation of public affairs is ever shifting, and the wise and patriotic Statesman must necessarily vary his own course to conform to, or oppose every altered state of circumstances. New truths are daily developed, not only in the scientific world, but in the workings of political systems, and especially in our own. Those only who are ignorant of these discoveries, can remain without change in their opinions; and to change opinions, and not avow and act upon them, is to be basely and dangerously false. Cicero, when accused of inconsistency in having sided with almost every party to which the convulsions of his times had given birth, fully admitted the fact, but nobly vindicated himself by showing, that, in every change, he had in view one consistent object—the good of Rome. Thus Cato, after years of warm hostility to Pompey, advised his countrymen to put all power into his hands. Thus Aristides volunteered to serve under Themistocle; thus Solon became the counsellor of Pisistratus, who have overthrown his Constitution. Mr. CALHOUN himself, as long ago as his speech on the repeal of the Embargo, had very properly defined inconsistency to be "a change of conduct without a change of circumstances to justify it." Tried by this standard, he was never liable to any imputation of inconsistency. He never moved in any direction without giving such cogent reasons for it, as must satisfy every impartial mind, if not of the propriety, at least, of the reality of his convictions. Influenced by the highest and most patriotic considerations, and scorning the false and vulgar cry of inconsistency, he did not hesitate a moment in magnanimously extending the thorough and effective

support of his powerful intellect, in the hour of their greatest need, to the man who had been, he believed, his most zealous enemy, and to the party which had excluded him from its ranks with the most violent anathemas.

He was now gladly welcomed back, and in the high and commanding position in the Republican Party, which, through the severest trials, he had a second time won for himself, it is difficult to over-estimate what he might have achieved, had that party been able to sustain itself in power at that time. But the name of Mr. Van Buren was not associated in the minds of the people, with any brilliant talents or illustrious services. Magician, as he was said to be among his partisans, he could cast no spell upon the masses, excited by the wide spread financial troubles of the times, all of which were naturally attributed by the ignorant, and not without much justice, to the errors and corruptions of the party then in power. He was overthrown in the election of 1840, and the Whigs came into the Presidency with a majority in both Houses of Congress. An extra Session was immediately called and held in the spring of 1841, but before it met, Gen. Harrison died, and the Vice President, Mr. Tyler, who, fortunately for the country, though a Whig, had been bred a State Rights Republican, succeeded to the vacant Chair.

The Whigs, elated with victory, rushed to Washington, resolved to secure all its fruits without delay, Banks, Tariffs, Distributions of Revenue, the most prodigal expenditures for individual and sectional benefit, and Bankrupt Laws, to wipe off the embarrassment of past extravagance and speculation, swam in

delightful confusion before their excited vision. Measures were promptly brought forward, and pressed on the minority with unequalled energy and arrogance. Mr. CALHOUN was the leader of the Republican Party in the Senate. He penetrated every design, and met every movement of the Whigs. To all the measures that could not be defeated, conditions were proposed and sustained with such unanswerable arguments, that the re-action of public opinion compelled the majority to pause, to waver, and finally give way: and the close of that Session, which had been called by the Whigs to consolidate their power, found them not only a dispirited, but virtually a defeated Party; results which were due in a great measure, to the activity and firmness, the powerful logic and profound Statesmanship of Mr. CALHOUN.

In that Session, however, and the two succeeding ones, during which the Whigs remained in power, several unconstitutional and dangerous measures were forced through. The Bankrupt law, which was soon repealed. The distribution of Revenue, arising from sales of public lands, which expired under the condition imposed on it. The re-charter of the Bank, which was vetoed by Mr. Tyler. The Tariff Act of 1842, which was equally stringent with that of 1828. This Act, which was passed in open violation of the Compromise Act of 1833 —a violation which should forever put an end to all faith in Legislative Compromises by Congress, was justified on the ground, that a larger revenue was indispensable to the Government. A justification deliberately prepared before hand by the unconstitutional distribution of a portion of the Revenue, and the prod-

igal expenditures which so many corrupt interests had fastened on the Government.

A resort to State action to resist this oppressive act, was again proposed by some in South-Carolina. But Mr. CALHOUN resisted it, because he believed that the next Congressional Elections would bring the Republicans into power, and that they would repeal the law. They obtained majorities, but did not repeal; and in 1844 a more strenuous effort was made to excite State interposition. But Mr. CALHOUN resisted still. There was one hope left. The approaching election for President would give the Republicans complete control of the Federal Government, and he desired to await that event. The fact was that after the experience of 1833,—the consolidation principles then avowed by all parties and the growing alienations of the different sections since,—he believed the Union could not survive the decisive resistance of a State on points of vital interest, and his attachment to it was so deep that he was averse to putting it to hazard, while any reasonable hope was left of redress by other means. A Republican President was elected, and in 1846 the Tariff of 1842 was so materially modified as to forbid extreme resistance. But after all the struggles of more than a quarter of a century, the Protective System, though somewhat weakened in opinion and narrowed in action, still flourishes in violation of every principle of free and equal Government—a gross infraction of the Constitution, and a deadly injury to the South.

During the Session of 1843, Mr. CALHOUN again strikingly displayed his devotion to his country and the impossibility of surrendering his serious convic-

tions and his patriotic sense of duty to party considerations, by strenuously and successfully opposing in common with the Whigs, a proposition from the Republican ranks to take possession of the whole of Oregon, without necessity, under doubtful title, and at imminent hazard of a war with England. And at the close of that Session he resigned his seat in the Senate, and retired from public life.

His health, which, although his constitution had been considered diseased and ultimately proved to be so, had been almost perfect throughout his long service, began now to exhibit some symptoms of decay. And well it might: and well might he be wearied out. For ten—in fact for fourteen successive years, he had been engaged in a contest that taxed to their utmost all his physical and mental powers. Body and spirit—he had devoted himself without a moment's respite to the arduous and perilous task of restoring a violated Constitution and a corrupted Government. It had been one long, raging storm, with scarce a single intermission. A storm such as none but the most hopeful and the bravest would have dared to defy, and in which none but the most prudent, the most hardy, the most skilful—endowed with the rarest intellect, strengthened by every resource upon which genius can make a requisition, and held to the encounter by an unconquerable will—could have outrode a second blast. But he stood in the centre of the vortex, unblenched, immoveable

> "As a tower, that firmly set,
> Shakes not its top for any wind that blows."

For the first time a clear expanse was now visible above the political horizon. The Federalists, tracked

through all their disguises, were again beaten to the ground. They lay prostrate, and the Republicans, after the salutary experience of a great reverse and many years of desperate warfare, all brought on by their own departure from the Constitution, were about to resume, in full, the reins of power, made wiser not only by the events of the past, but by the brilliant light which his clear and profound intellect had shed and concentrated around the principles of Constitutional Government; and Mr. Calhoun, with the entire approbation of his friends, seized this apparently propitious moment to retire and recruit after his long and arduous labours.

The State of South-Carolina in May, 1843, nominated Mr. Calhoun for the Presidency. But in December following he withdrew his name, when it became apparent that the Convention to be held at Baltimore to nominate the candidate of the whole Republican Party, was not to be constituted on principles analogous to the Constitution. He could not, with his views, accept a nomination, if tendered, by a Convention formed in any other manner, and he did not wish to embarrass the Party for mere personal considerations. He was not permitted, however, to enjoy his repose for any length of time. In the spring of 1844 he was nominated as Secretary of State by Mr. Tyler, without his previous knowledge; and the nomination being instantly and unanimously confirmed, he could not do otherwise than obey the call. Two critical and eminently important negociations were then on foot. One to adjust the Oregon question with England—the other to secure the annexation of Texas. In the latter his success was complete, and to him perhaps more than

to any other, we owe that important and invaluable acquisition. The Oregon negociation was not closed when Mr. Polk came into office, who did not tender him the re-appointment as Secretary, but offered and urged on him an Embassy to England, to continue that negociation. But believing his post of duty was, if any where, on this side of the Atlantic, he declined the Embassy and returned once more to his Plantation.

In the hands of Mr. CALHOUN's successor, the Oregon negociations completely failed. The President was pledged by his party to claim the whole of the Territory, and the fulfilment of that pledge was now demanded. Should Congress sustain the claim war was inevitable, and as the Republican Party had majorities in both Houses, there seemed to be no escape. The whole country became alarmed. In this exciting crisis, the eyes of all parties, all interests, all classes, were turned instinctively to Mr. CALHOUN, the pilot who had weathered so many storms—the sagacious and patriotic Statesman who had been found equal to every emergency. His return to the Federal Councils was called for from every quarter, and his successor in the Senate, Judge Huger, with a rare magnanimity, offered to give way for him. There was no resisting such appeals, and he returned to Washington late in December, 1846. When he took his seat, it was so fully understood that the Executive, backed by a majority in Congress, was resolved to assert our right to the whole of Oregon, and to attempt to take immediate possession of it, that the opposition was paralyzed in despair. He did not lose a moment in taking a clear, decided and open stand against the Administration he had contributed so largely to bring into power. He rallied the dispir-

ited opposition, composed chiefly of Whigs, with whom he had lately been so violently contending. He appealed to the country against the Republican Party. The sound common sense of the people sustained him: and the tide of public opinion set in so strongly in favour of a compromise with England, that negociations were resumed with fresh vigour, and in a few months the whole question was adjusted to the entire satisfaction of the great body of every party in the two countries. In his whole public career, Mr. Calhoun had never rendered a more conspicuous—perhaps not a more substantial service to his country; and it was appreciated and acknowledged throughout the Union. To him, and almost to him alone, was justly and universally accredited the distinguished merit of having saved the United States from a war with the most powerful nation in the world, about a matter so insignificant as to be almost frivolous, and in which neither the honor nor the interests of either were seriously involved. Thousands of such wars disfigure the pages of history, and have often been the most bloody and disastrous.

But this affair had hardly been placed in a sure train of settlement before another difficulty arose, in appearance far less formidable, but in its results likely to prove much the most important in our annals, since the Revolution. A sudden, and to the great body of our people, most unexpected war broke out with Mexico. Pending negociations with that Republic concerning the western boundary of Texas, a portion of our Army had been, contrary to the usual courtesy of nations, marched into the disputed Territory. The Mexicans attacked it. Battles ensued, and a flame was

kindled, which spread instantaneously over both countries. Congress was called on to declare, or rather to recognize the existence of war, and to make the most extensive provisions for its vigorous prosecution. Mr. CALHOUN, without a moment's hesitation, took his stand against the war. He condemned the invasion of disputed territory, but as it had been done and battles fought, he was for voting such supplies as would enable our army to maintain its position, and without recognizing a state of war, to renew negociations. But he stood alone—literally alone—abandoned by all parties in the Senate. Yet he did not waver. He knew that peace was the fundamental policy of our country. That war was disastrous to all its real interests, and was only to be waged to maintain that most vital of all interests—its honor. And that could never be involved in a contest with so weak a power as Mexico. He saw, too, that all his hopes of reforming the Government and resuscitating the Constitution must vanish when the sword was drawn. Other fatal consequences were also apparent to his keen vision. But he could not see all. No human sagacity could penetrate them then, or can penetrate them now. Mr. CALHOUN declared that though he foresaw much evil, for the first time in his whole public life, he could not form a rational conjecture of the end—that an impenetrable curtain had fallen betwixt him and the future. For the first time, too, he was sunk in gloom. And that great heart, which had never before felt fear, was stricken with terror—almost with despair. Hostilities were carried on with vigour. Victory crowned every effort of our arms; and an imperishable wreath of military glory was won for our flag—South-Carolina

contributing some of the brightest and most unfading flowers. Mr. CALHOUN steadily interposed on every opportune occasion to arrest the progress of the war, brilliant as it was; and hailed with delight the Treaty of Peace, which was ratified early in 1848.

The first important consequence of the war was an immense expenditure,—far exceeding the ordinary revenues, and entailing on the country a heavy debt, which has put an end to all prospect of an early reduction of the Protective Duties. The next was the overthrow of the political party which conducted it, by the elevation of one of its successful Generals to the Presidency. An event not due so much to the errors committed by the one, or the wisdom and patriotism displayed by the other party, as to the disgust felt by a large portion of the people for both, and their desire to establish for once an administration that would not be governed by party considerations—a desire which has been altogether disappointed. The third great consequence of the war has been the unparalelled excitement occasioned by the attempt and failure to make a fair division between the Slaveholding and non-Slaveholding sections of this confederacy, of the immense territory acquired from Mexico—an excitement in the midst of which we now are, and the result of which it is not given us to foresee.

I have omitted thus far to do more than incidentally allude to a question of the highest and most vital interest, which has long and deeply agitated our country, in the conduct of which Mr. CALHOUN has acted throughout a conspicuous and leading part. At the period of the Declaration of Independence, African Slavery was established in every Colony, and as late

as the formation of the Constitution, Slaves were still held in every State. But it was a decaying institution every where save in the Plantation States, and great apprehensions existed among the Southern members of the Convention that the other States would combine to emancipate all the Slaves immediately, or gradually. They therefore refused absolutely to enter into any union with them without a distinct agreement on this essential matter. One great object in so constructing the Federal Government that it should have no powers not clearly conferred upon it, reserving all others to the States, was to prevent legislation on this subject. But beyond this the Southern Delegates required a Constitutional obligation from all the other States, to assist them in maintaining their authority over their Slaves, in case of necessity, by restoring fugitives and aiding to put down insurrections. They also demanded a recognition of Slaves as a permanent element of political power and a fixed caste, by assigning them a representation, though a restricted one, in Congress. From the adoption of the Constitution up to 1819, the harmony between the North and South was never for a moment seriously disturbed by the Slave question. At that period, when Missouri applied for admission into the Union, the North, where African Slavery was now almost wholly extinct, opposed her application, on the ground that Slaveholding was permitted by her Constitution. A deeply exciting controversy immediately arose, which was finally adjusted by the concession from the South that thereafter no Slaveholding State should be admitted into the Union North of 36° 30′ N. latitude.

For many years after that there was no open agita-

tion of this exciting topic, and public men in every section generally concurred in frowning upon all attempts to bring it forward. It was not until 1834 or '35, that it again made its appearance on the political stage, when petitions were poured in upon Congress to legislate upon it. It was then discovered that without attracting much attention, a great many Abolition Societies had been formed in the Northern States, who had set up presses and printed books, pamphlets, newspapers and engravings in immense numbers, and disseminated them North and South for the purpose of arousing the people to what were termed the horrors of African Slavery. Public lecturers were also employed and sent every where. The excitement increased rapidly. The people of the non-Slaveholding States seemed ripe for it. But lately they had been apparently baffled in their attempt to make us the overseers of our Slaves for their benefit. No longer having it in prospect to reap the harvest of our fields and gather into their own granaries, by virtue of their legislation, one half of the nett produce of the labour of the Slaves, they were eager, in their rage and disappointment, to deprive us of the Slaves themselves, and blast our prosperity forever. Both branches of Congress were soon flooded with petitions, full of the vilest abuse and slander of the South, and praying for the Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade in the District of Columbia. Others followed asking the Abolition of Slavery in the Territories, Forts, Dockyards, &c., and of the trade between the States. Some demanded the Abolition of Slavery in the States; and finally it was petitioned that the Union should be dissolved to save the North from the sin of Slaveholding.

Warm and at length the most angry debates in Congress were brought about by these petitions. At first, few or none professed to be in favour of them, yet the non-Slaveholding majority never would permit the South to adopt any decisive measure to exclude them from the Halls of Congress. In no long while, however, there was a complete change. The Abolitionists were soon strong enough to enter fully into the political field. They nominated candidates for President and Vice-President, and exhibited the startling fact, that in that election they held the balance of power between the parties in several of the largest States. From that moment they were courted openly or secretly by nearly every aspiring politician in the non-Slaveholding States. They soon sent members to Congress as their especial Representatives, and struck down every public man in the North who dared to defend the institutions of the South.

Against this violent crusade on the South, Mr. Calhoun took his stand at the very first and combatted it with all his powers, at every step, and to the latest moment of his life. He succeeded in arresting the circulation of Abolition publications through the mail, and for a long time he kept their petitions at the threshold of the Houses of Congress. In fact, Abolition petitions were formally received in the Senate for the first time, on the last day that he appeared there. From the beginning he predicted the progress of this agitation through all its stages, and declared that it must inevitably bring about a dissolution of the Union, if not put down early and forever.

While the Abolitionists have directed their attacks against specific parts of the Slave system, they have

never made any secret of what indeed was perfectly apparent, that from the first their object was the entire emancipation of all the African race in the United States, without removal and without compensation to their owners, since removal or compensation are known to be utterly impossible. They proclaimed that by the laws of nature all men are free and equal; and that African Slavery is a social and political evil, and a deadly sin against God. Mr. Calhoun contended that if our Slavery was a social evil and sin, we alone would be the sufferers and should be allowed to deal with it ourselves. Politically he claimed for it only the fulfilment of the solemn guarantees of the Constitution. But he thought it could not be a sin since God had expressly ordained it, nor an evil since both the white and black races had improved in every point of view under the system. He scouted the idea of natural freedom and equality. Men were born helpless, and owed life, liberty and every thing to those who nurtured them. A state of complete natural liberty was inconceivable. Even the wildest savages placed severe restraints upon it. And so far from men being created equal, no two men, and in fact no two things, were ever yet created precisely equal. Inequality is the fundamental law of nature, and hence alone the harmony of the universe. But it was useless to attempt to reason with enthusiastic Abolitionists, or with the masses of the non-Slaveholders, equally bigoted in their abstract notions of morality, freedom and equality. It was still more useless to attempt to reason with politicians who existed only in the breath of such a people. A majority influenced by such ideas, and led on, some by a fanatical zeal to enforce what

they believed to be truth, others by the love of power, and all by the hope of spoil, has never yet been effectually checked except by force.

It has not, however, yet become the plan of the Abolitionists to carry their purposes by a direct and decisive exertion of the political power they possess. They wish first to acquire a more overwhelming power, both political and physical. And to effect this they have aimed steadily to enlarge their own domain and to narrow down that of the Slaveholders, while they have endeavored to divide the South by appeals to the consciences of all, and to the supposed interests of the non-Slaveholders among us. And the two great political parties of the North have skilfully aided them in dividing and lulling the South for the purpose of keeping up their own connections with their respective allies here. They have united in denouncing, and have taught many to denounce as ultraists, disunionists and traitors, all those who have attempted to awaken the Southern people to a sense of the dangers that environed them. And more denounced than all the rest was Mr. CALHOUN, whose sagacity could not be deluded—whose virtue was incorruptible, and whose constant exposure of their designs and effective opposition to them, was apparently the greatest obstacle to their success. Listening to no compromises, and snapping instantly every party tie where this transcendant question was involved, he waged mortal combat on every issue, open or concealed. The great difficulty with the Abolitionists was to identify their cause with some of the great practical political questions of the country. The pretended infringement of the much abused right of petition could not be made to serve them materially,

for it was too absurd to contend that Congress was bound to receive and treat respectfully all sorts of petitions—petitions frivolous, unconstitutional and destructive of law, order and society. When the annexation of Texas was brought forward, they fastened upon that and opposed it with great zeal and much effect, upon the ground that it extended the area of Slavery. But there were too many interests even in the North in favour of annexation, and Mr. CALHOUN was enabled to defeat them signally. But when the Mexican war was declared, a new and vast field was opened to them. It was certain that a large territory would be gained by that war: and it was scarcely begun before it was moved in Congress and carried in the House, and almost carried in the Senate, to prohibit Slavery in the domain that might be acquired.

The alarm was immediately sounded, and the South appeared for once to be fully roused. A number of Southern States declared through their Legislatures that if this Prohibition was enacted they would not submit to it. While on the other hand a still larger number of Northern States made Legislative declarations in favour of it, and instructed their Senators to support it. And thus at length the Abolition question, always purely sectional, became again, as in the case of Missouri, but under far more ominous circumstances, the chief element in the most important practical political issue of the day. From 1846 up to near the close of the late memorable Session of Congress, this contest was carried on in various forms with deepening import, until at length it entirely absorbed the public mind, and occupied the Federal Government to the almost total exclusion of all other business. Early

in the last Session it came up on the proposition to admit California into the Union. A band of adventurers having assembled in that distant region in unknown numbers, and to a great extent of unknown origin—scarcely any with legal titles to lands, and still fewer with fixed residences—after calling a Convention without proper authority, formed a government and demanded admission, as a Sovereign State, into the Union, with Boundaries embracing the whole Pacific coast to Oregon, and a Constitution, which, for the express purpose of securing the support of the non-Slaveholding majority, prohibited Slavery.

Mr. CALHOUN's health, which had been failing rapidly for a few years past, had at length become so feeble that it was evident to his friends he could not survive long; and during the previous summer it was considered almost impossible that he could return again to Washington. To almost any other man it would have been impossible. But when he saw the great battle which he had so long led, had reached, as he believed, its final crisis: and that the fate of his country hung on the momentous movement which was about to be made, he discarded all thoughts of self-preservation, and hastened to the field, resolved to spend his last breath in striking one more blow for the great cause of the South—the cause of Justice and of the Constitution.

Arrived at Washington, his health was so feeble that he was soon compelled to remain most of his time at his lodgings, and went only occasionally to the Senate. In the mean while the conflict went fiercely on: and numerous plans for adjusting it were set afloat. Mr. CALHOUN committed his views to paper, and on the

4th of March, after a long interval, appeared with it in the Senate. But he was not able even to read it, and transferred the task to his friend, Mr. Mason, a Senator from Virginia. In that speech he traced the territorial history of the United States, showing that the non-Slaveholding States, who originally owned but one fourth of the territory of the Union, were about to succeed, by the action of the Government and the concessions of the South, in getting possession of nearly three-fourths of it: that by the system of revenue and expenditure which had been adopted, much the larger portion of the taxes were paid by the South, while the disbursements were made chiefly at the North: and that while these measures destroyed the equilibrium between the two sections, the Federal Government had concentrated all power in itself, and interpreted the Constitution and ruled the country according to the will of a majority, responsible only to the Northern section, by which it is elected. The result of all, he said, was that "what was once a Constitutional Federal Republic, is now converted in reality into one as absolute as that of the Autocrat of Russia, and as despotic in its tendencies as any absolute Government that ever existed." He showed that the California adventurers had no right to attempt to form a State without previous permission from Congress, and that what they had done was "revolutionary and rebellious in its character, anarchial in its tendency, and calculated to lead to the most dangerous consequences" He gave a succinct history of Abolition from its origin; shewed how it had gained strength year by year, and declared that "if something decisive was not now done to arrest it, the South would be forced to choose be-

tween Emancipation and Secession." He denounced the childish idea of preserving the Union by continually crying "Union! Union! the glorious Union!" and expressed his conviction that there was no other way to save it, but by an amendment to the Constitution, "which would restore to the South in substance the power she possessed of protecting herself, before the equilibrium between the two sections was destroyed by the action of the Government."

No speech ever pronounced in Congress produced a more profound sensation there and in the country than this did. The deep and incalculable importance of the questions in issue; and the fact that this was generally regarded as the last effort of an illustrious statesman, who had for almost half a century lead in the councils of the Confederacy, scarcely heightened the intensity of the interest created by the novel and startling, yet sound and prophetic views which had been developed with a force and clearness rarely equalled. Mr. CALHOUN himself intended it rather as a preliminary speech. He still hoped that he could, by his iron will, baffle and repel the advances of disease, and that God would spare him to consummate this last task. He had only laid down his groundwork, and reserved ample materials for reply, after all had exhibited their positions, and his had been sufficiently attacked. He did not even announce what amendments to the Constitution he intended to propose. Whatever they were—for he afterwards said that several were necessary—the suggestion of them manifested his undiminished anxiety for the preservation of a Constitutional Union; and the latest offering of his life was laid upon that altar at which he had so long worshipped. It is

scarcely to be regretted that he did not specify them, for nothing is more certain than that no amendments to the Constitution can ever be carried, that will give the South the express power of self-protection. They would not receive a single vote from that Northern majority, which will ere long be large enough to amend the Constitution without the South, if it shall choose to regard forms in perpetrating its oppressions. But such amendments, if passed, would not avail the South, for her action under them would soon be denounced as revolutionary, as the clearly Constitutional right of Secession is now denounced.

In fact, neither this Union nor any Union or Government can exist long by virtue of mere paper stipulations. "Written Constitutions," said Anacharsis to Solon, "are but spiders webs, which hold only the poor and weak, while the rich and powerful easily break through." Solon thought otherwise, but lived to see the Government he established completely overthrown. Lycurgus, more wise, forbade written laws. His principles were durably impressed, by training from childhood, on the minds and manners of his people, and interwoven with the whole social fabric. And they governed the Spartans for six centuries or more. In modern France no enacted Constitution has survived five years; while the Constitution of England, resting on traditions and occasional Acts and Charters, appears to bid defiance to time and progress. Those Governments only can endure which naturally spring from the social system, and are habitually sustained by it. And written—artificial Constitutions are indeed but "spiders webs" if they do not continually draw their vital breath from the same living source. For more

than twenty years the Federal Constitution has been a dead letter, or a snare to the minority. It has, for that length of time, had no material influence in maintaining the Union of these States. They have been held together by habit: by the recollections of the past and a common reverence for the patriots and heroes of the Revolution: by the ties of political parties, of religious sects, and business intercourse. But the events of these twenty years, and mainly the developments of Abolitionism, have clearly revealed to us that we have at least two separate, distinct, and in some essential points, antagonistic social systems, whose differences can never be reconciled and subjected to one equal and just Government, unless our respective industrial interests are left free from every shackle, and the fell spirit of Abolitionism crushed and entirely eradicated. Many of the cords which once bound these two systems together have been, as Mr. CALHOUN pointed out in his last speech, already snapped asunder. The religious bonds have been nearly all ruptured: party ties are going fast: those of business are seriously endangered. It is vain to hope to preserve the Union by any common sentiment of reverence for the past, or even by amending the Constitution, unless these severed chains can be relinked together, and that brotherly love which mingled the blood of our fathers in the battle fields of the Revolution can be restored, by Providential interposition, to its ancient fervor. It is, however, the province and the sacred duty of the statesman, whatever may be the ultimate result, to point out the diseases of the Constitution and the Government, and to propose the best remedies he can. This was the great object of Mr. CALHOUN for the last two and twenty years of his

career. For this he lived: and to this his last efforts and his latest thoughts were consecrated.

Consecrated in vain! for already the disease has passed a fatal crisis, and there is no longer a remedy that can save. California has been admitted and the equilibrium of this Government has been destroyed forever. The edict has gone forth that no new Slaveholding State shall ever enter the Union: and the South, deprived at last and finally of her equality in the Senate, the only safe hold she ever had in this Confederacy, and from which she has so long and so nobly battled for her rights, is now condemned to a minority that can know no change, in every department of the Federal Government. The Slaveholding States have become emphatically the Provinces of a great Empire, ruled by a permanent sectional majority, unrelentingly hostile to them, and daring as it is despotic. If they submit to continue thus, their history is already written in the chronicles of Poland, of Hungary, and of Ireland—perhaps of St. Domingo and Jamaica.

After the 4th of March, Mr. Calhoun went but two or three times to the Senate Chamber. His last appearance there was on the 13th of that month; and as if the political storms which had pursued him so long were fated to pursue him to the last, he had on that day a warm debate, in which he was compelled to maintain the expediency of his proposition to amend the Constitution: and to defend himself from the charge of aiming to dissolve the Union. He retired exhausted, and returned no more. But still his thoughts were there, and his anxious interest for his distracted country lent its excitement to every pulsation of his heart. "If I could have," he said as his end drew near, "If I

could have one hour more to speak in the Senate, I could do more good than on any past occasion of my life."

He expired tranquilly on the morning of the 31st of March.

The deep and poignant grief which pervaded our State on the announcement of this event, although it was not unexpected, I will not attempt to depict. Your own hearts retain and cherish a recollection of it more vivid and more durable than could be recalled or impressed by any words of mine. The same feelings seemed to penetrate almost every portion of the Union. Since the death of Washington, no similar event, it is generally agreed, has produced a sensation so profound and universal. Envy and malice, sectional hostility and party persecution, seemed to be instantly extinguished. His real greatness was at once fully acknowledged, and all united in paying the highest honors to his memory.

Mr. CALHOUN's moral character, as exhibited to the public, was of the Roman stamp. Lofty in his sentiments, stern in his bearing, inflexible in his opinions, there was no sacrifice he would not have made without a moment's hesitation, and few that he did not make to his sense of duty and his love of country. As a Consul, he would have been a Publicola,—as a Censor, Cato—as a Tribune, Gracchus. He was often denounced for his ambition, but his integrity was never questioned. "Ambition is," as Mr. Burke justly said, "the malady of every extensive genius." Mr. CALHOUN's enemies believed that it infected him to an extraordinary and dangerous degree. But the enemies of every distinguished man have said the same. He undoubtedly desired power. But there is no evidence to

be found, either in his conduct or in his words, that he ever stooped to any mean compliance to obtain it, or that when obtained, he ever used it but in the purest manner and for the welfare of his whole country. The nature of his ambition was well tested. Eight years Vice-President: for as long a period a Minister of State: six years in the House of Representatives, and fifteen in the Senate of the United States, he enjoyed all the power of the highest offices of our Government save the very highest, and that he would in all human probability have attained, but that his aspirations were subordinate to his principles, and these led him to repudiate his party, and throw himself into opposition to its corruptions when it was at the zenith of its power.

That he did not reach the Presidency, and that no other statesman of the first rank has had the slightest prospect of reaching it for the last five and twenty years, are among the most striking proofs of the downward tendency of our Federal Institutions.

In private life Mr. Calhoun was remarkably accessible. Open, unsuspicious, mild in his manners and uniformly warm, cheerful, and hopeful, he was interesting, instructive and agreeable to all who had the happiness to know him. While in every domestic relation his conduct approached as near perfection as we can suppose human nature capable of doing.

The intellect of Mr. Calhoun was cast in the Grecian mould: intuitive, profound, original—descending to the minutest details of practical affairs; and soaring aloft with the balanced wing into the broadest heavens of invention. He appreciated wit and humor, the flights of fancy and the keen shafts of sarcasm; but he either did not possess or entirely failed to cultivate

the faculties which lead to distinction in these lines. He admired and valued lofty declamation on appropriate occasions; and sometimes, though rarely, attempted it himself, and not without success. The force of his imagination, his command of language, his nobility of sentiment, and his enthusiastic temperament eminently qualified him for declamation of the highest order, and his themes were as well adapted to it as those of Demosthenes himself. But the audience to which he commonly addressed himself could not hear his voice or see his action, or decide his cause under the spell of eloquence. It covered millions of square miles, and reached far down the stream of time. And his keen judgment and deep earnestness would not often permit him to use weapons that could reach effectively those only who were near at hand. The intellectual power of Mr. CALHOUN was due mainly to the facility and accuracy with which he resolved propositions into their elementary principles; and the astonishing rapidity with which he deduced from these principles all their just and necessary consequences. The moment a sophism was presented to him he pierced it through and through, and plunging into the labyrinth, brought truth from the remote recesses where it delights to dwell, and placed it before the eyes of men. It was in these pre-eminent faculties that Mr. CALHOUN's mind resembled the antique and particularly the genuine Greek mind, which recoiled from plausibilities and looked with ineffable disgust on that mere grouping of associated ideas which so generally passes for reasoning. It was in conformity with these great intellectual endowments that he created all his speeches and State papers. It was commonly said of his productions that

they were characterized by extraordinary condensation. But Mr. CALHOUN was often careless in his diction, and habitually so in the construction of his sentences. He sought only the words that most clearly expressed his meaning, and left their arrangement apparently to chance. What he did do was to go straight to the bottom of his subject, following the slender plummet line of truth until he reached it. Then he built up in a manner equally direct, discarding all extraneous materials: and erected a structure, simple, uniform and consistent, decorated with no ornament for the sake of ornament, and occupying no more space than was necessary for the purposes in view.

The faculty of Invention—which is the highest characteristic of genius—is the necessary result of rapid and correct analysis and synthesis. To the possession of these powers then is also due the acknowledged originality of Mr. CALHOUN, which gave such a peculiar charm to every one of his productions, as led the public invariably to pronounce his latest to be the best. The common mind never looks beneath the surface, and draws its conclusions from the facts and arguments that float around it. Even rather uncommon minds seldom penetrate very deep or very quickly. From whatever subject, therefore, such extraordinary powers of analysis and generalization were brought to bear upon, they would necessarily extract ideas lying far beyond the range of others, and so new and startling as to overwhelm ordinary intellects and obliterate their confused remembrances of past productions, in which he had carried them delighted through equally unaccustomed regions.

Hence also arose and was received the charge, worn

thread-bare by reiteration, that Mr. CALHOUN's mind was too metaphysical and speculative for conducting the affairs of Government. A charge which, if it was not absurd in itself, was signally refuted by his conduct of the War, by his organization of the War Department, by his negociations as Secretary of State, by his frequent minute, and accurate, and powerful elucidations of all the financial, commercial, manufacturing and agricultural operations of the country—in short, by his whole course from the commencement to the close of his career. It was the remarkable characteristic of the Greek mind, now too little appreciated, to be at once practical and speculative, as in fact it ever has been of all really great minds. In the palmiest days of Greece her Philosophers were Statesmen, her Poets and Historians were Warriors. The Astronomer who first predicted an eclipse made his fortune by dealing in olives. To a successful Usurper we owe the collection of the scattered songs of Homer. The mere practitioner is necessarily a quack in medicine, a pettifogger in law, and a charlatan in politics.

The colloquial powers of Mr. CALHOUN have been highly lauded. But this is a mistake. Strictly speaking he had no uncommon endowment in that line. It is true that he entered readily and easily into any conversation, and there were few subjects on which he did not throw new light, or at least dissipate some of the darkness that might surround them. But he exhibited no sparkling wit, no keen retort, none of that liveliness of fancy which so delightfully season and refine familiar conversation. Nor was he anything of a *raconteur*. All these things he occasionally enjoyed

with much zest, but rarely attempted himself. The conversation in which he really shone was but a modified species of Senatorial debate. And in that no one approached to an equality with him. In the Senate, where time is given for preparation and the conflict of intellect is conducted for the most part like a cannonade by heavy discharges at considerable intervals, his opponents might make a show of vigorous combat with him. But in the close encounter of informal colloquy, there was no one who could stand before him. The astonishing rapidity of his intellectual operations enabled him to anticipate every proposition before it was half stated, to resolve it into all its parts, and not only to answer his opponent without a moments hesitation, but to take up his whole train of argument, run through it in advance of him, and so turn all his points as to convince or at least to silence him. At these times there was a fascination about him which no one could resist. It was not merely his warmth, his earnestness, his deep sincerity that charmed, but his reasoning—commencing so far back, and disentangling the first elements, the facts and principles,—moved forward with such simplicity and ease; such clearness and connection: with a sweep so graceful, yet so broad and powerful that you felt as though you were listening rather to a narrative than to an argument. There were rarely any topes or figures, or learned illustrations, but your very passions were enlisted by the ardour and intenseness of his logic, and you were carried unresistingly along, as well by the force of your imagination as by the convictions of your judgment. The power which Mr. Calhoun thus exercised was so transcendant that

could he have seen and conversed with every individual in the Union, he would have reigned supreme over public opinion.

The fame of Mr. CALHOUN will rest chiefly on his character as a Statesman. Posterity, with a knowledge of events yet concealed from us, will analyse it closely. It is believed it will stand the most rigid scrutiny. So many qualifications are necessary to the formation of Statesmen, and so rare a combination of all the highest moral and mental qualities is requisite to constitute one of the first order, that they are usually rated rather by degrees of ability, than by the peculiarities of talent. Such peculiarities, however, do exist, and so color their current opinions, that they are in all countries classed, at least temporarily, according to the domestic parties whose views they favor for the time. In this country, where every thing is so new and variable: where not only our political institutions are experimental, but our civilization has not attained a permanent standard, there is great difficulty in appropriating distinctive names to our Statesmen—a difficulty enhanced by the fact that nearly or quite all of our eminent men have, in the course of their careers, radically changed some of their opinions: a change which indeed few of the great Statesmen of any country, in the last eighty eventful years, have escaped.

Coming into the public councils at a period when twenty years of successful experiment had, it was thought, fully tested our Federal Constitution, and established the permanency of the Federal Government—when a vigorous effort to convert it into a central despotism had been signally defeated, and all sectional jealousies and apprehensions had been lulled,

Mr. Calhoun devoted himself wholly and enthusiastically to the great purpose of developing all the mighty resources of his country, and raising her to the highest pitch of prosperity and grandeur. His views were large—far reaching—noble. And his measures were in full accordance with them. Whenever, in war or in peace, an exigency occurred, his active and inventive genius promptly suggested a provision for it, always ample, and usually the best that could be adopted. Whenever favouring circumstances invited a forward movement, or a wider exertion of energy, he was ever ready with plans thoroughly digested and fully adapted to accomplish all the ends in view. While close in his calculations, and careful of details, there was nothing low or narrow in any thing he ever proposed. He had an ineffable scorn for whatever was mean or contracted in legislation; and having an abiding confidence, not only in truth and justice, but in the power of reason, and the capacity of the people to appreciate what was right and comprehend the arguments in favour of it,—he never for a moment yielded to the current popular opinion, when it differed from his own. He expected to restrain it by his logic, and ultimately reverse it by the benefits his measures would confer. As a Progressive Statesman, leading ardently during the first part of his career the very van of Progress, Mr. Calhoun may be considered a perfect model.—

When, however, a few years of peace had developed in this new and rapidly growing country, what it has taken thirty years to make manifest in older and more closely cemented social fabrics—that Governments and Constitutions are more severely tried by the conflicts of domestic than of foreign interests, and ambition; and

it became evident that our Government was to be perverted and our Constitution set aside, to enable one section of this Confederacy to despoil another—then Mr. CALHOUN became a Conservative Statesman. He saw that in common with the founders of the Republic, he had been deceived in his belief that the Constitution had been consecrated by a quarter of a century of successful operation, and that all danger of a central despotism had passed by. He saw what many—in all countries—have been too slow in seeing,—that there is a Progress which, like "vaulting ambition, o'erleaps itself." He recoiled from the operation of machinery he had himself aided to put in motion; and he now ardently devoted all his talents and all his energy to arrest the march of usurpation and corruption: and to preserve the liberties and institutions inherited from our fathers.

But merely negative and stolid conservatism did not at all suit the genius of Mr. CALHOUN, which was essentially active and ever looking forward to the improvement of mankind. He sought, therefore, earnestly, to discover the principles and theory of Movement that might be onward and unfailing—yet regular and safe. In accomplishing this task, he sounded anew the depths of human nature: he re-viewed the whole science of politics: he analysed the Constitution word by word—its letter and its spirit: and he studied thoroughly the workings of our Government. The result was that he lifted himself above all parties, and became a Philosophical Statesman—the only true and real Statesman. And it was in the wide and exhaustless field now opened to him, that he gathered those immortal laurels, whose

verdure shall delight, whose blossoms shall refresh, whose fruit shall be the food of the latest posterity.

The example of his noble efforts to reform the Government and to restore the Constitution of his country,—distinguished by the display of the vastest resources and the most masterly powers of intellect,—though like Agis, and Conon and the younger Brutus, he failed in his glorious designs—will live forever. But his speeches and writings will constitute a new epoch in the science of Politics. Our Federal Constitution, he often said, was in advance of the wisdom of those who framed it; and he it was who first thoroughly explored, comprehended, and expounded it. He found in it nearly all that was requisite to establish on the firmest foundations, a free and popular Government, which was his beau ideal of Government: and which, though it has had many friends and many martyrs and has been illustrated by patriots and heroes, has scarcely before had a genuine Apostle. He laid down for the first time its true principles and marked out its true limits: and has shown how it might, and unless vigilantly watched would eventually depart from those principles and limits, and produce all those evils which have so long made it odious to the best and wisest men. He has shown on the other hand how capable it is of unlimited expansion, to meet all the exigencies and reap all the benefits of real progress—if its power is confided to the proper majorities and their suffrages collected in the proper manner: and how its harmony may be kept undisturbed and its duration made perpetual, by securing to the minorities the sacred and all-important right of self-protection. In short, he has so

thoroughly elucidated all the checks and balances of Free Constitutions—simple and confederated—that henceforth, in the long tide of time, no Republic will be erected or reformed on a durable foundation, without a constant recurrence to the theories he has discussed, and the measures he has proposed; and a profound observance of the precepts he has taught.

I have endeavoured to point out the most prominent events in the life of Mr. CALHOUN: the parts he took in public affairs: the services he rendered his country: the policy and views by which he was at various periods influenced. I have also endeavoured to pourtray the most striking features of his moral and intellectual character; and have briefly reviewed his Statesmanship. My task is executed, however feebly and imperfectly. It would be vain to attempt to fathom the Divine Will, and seek to learn why, in this most eventful period of our history, our Great Leader has been snatched away, leaving no one behind who can fill his place. What we do know is, that high and sacred duties have devolved on us; and imitating his illustrious example, we should go forward in the performance of them with "unshaken confidence in the Providence of God."